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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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MEEKNESS, A POWER.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."—MATT. v., 5.

The beatitudes may be called moral paradoxes. There is an internal truth in them all; and yet all of them go against the general impressions of men in respect to what is true.

"Blessed are they that mourn."

People have not been accustomed to think of affliction as any great privilege.

"Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you."

Persecution has not been regarded as among the pleasures of life.

"Blessed are the meek."

Well, yes; a good, round-faced, sunshiny man, sitting in a corner, and having no care and no business, is a very good thing: but when it is said, "They shall inherit the earth," men are astonished. Inherit the earth? the meek inherit the earth? "Why!" say men, looking back, "where did you ever find one of these men of moon-shine that was worth anything when affairs were mixed, and when there was need of thought, energy, will, combination, power? Then it is, when the world's face is changed, that there are armies on the land, and fleets whitening the seas, and counsellors planning together, and the pouring out of money everywhere; but the great forces of life are not derived from this meagre, moonshiny meekness of quiet men that let you punch them, and do not strike back, and let you do just what you have a mind to, and do not hinder you. This is as if zero were to be put at the head of all arithmetic."

Now, if we should read in Buffon, or Cuvier, or Agassiz,

SUNDAY MORNING, Feb. 21, 1875. LESSON: Psa. xxxvii. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 2,647, 660.

that in the animal kingdom rabbits and sheep dominate over all other animals, and that nightingales and canary birds rule owls, vultures and eagles, it would not seem more astonishing than for the Bible to say that the meek shall inherit the earth.

If it had said, "They shall have quiet," everybody would have responded, "O yes, they shall have quiet." If it had said, "They shall have a pure heart," everybody would have conceded, "Yes, they shall have a pure heart." Men would have admitted these things: but to say that they are to govern; to take that which is regarded as springing from weakness, and that which has in it less overtness, apparently, than any other quality, and to elect it to supremacy, and declare, "It shall be magistrate, it shall rule, it shall possess the earth," with this great roaring race, red with blood, flashing with arms, combining with all forms of victorious plans, rolling through time as the waves, storm-heated, roll through the ocean,—that is too much for anybody. Men cannot understand how meekness is going to inherit the earth.

And yet, it is very remarkable that this is not the utterance of a later period—that it is not the utterance of a mystic in Judea—that it is not the utterance of an inspired peasant, as men would say. It is the testimony of the sacred writings of the Bible, down through a period of four thousand years —years in which by reason of men's weakness, polygamy and slavery were tolerated, and evasions and untruths were not, by good men, counted as such vices and crimes as they are now. Through all the inchoate, nascent, emergent periods of the race, there has been still in every part of the Old Testament, clear down to the New, this steady testimony—namely, that the moral element is the strongest. Humility, purity, righteousness, yea, and meekness, by name, have been lauded from the very first, and they have been declared to be in supremacy.

"The meek will he guide in judgment."

As I read to you, in the 37th Psalm, this morning,

"The meek shall inherit the earth."

This is from the lips of that robust old warrior, as well as sweet singer, David. It was not by meekness that he gained

everything which he had; but when he was inspired to speak out of the amplitude of his observation and experience, and from the predominance of his nobler and finer feelings, he saw that thread of truth even in his day; and he declared (and the declaration becomes a more significant testimony since it is from a man of the spear and sword; a man who built a kingdom and brought it into military power; a man who subdued, for the time being, a vast portion of the East) that, after all, there was something more than the spear and sword.

"The meek shall inherit the earth."

If you will take the trouble, with your concordance, to run through the words "Meek" and "Meekness," you will be astonished to see this steady testimony all the way through, from beginning to end.

To me, this is one of those elements which go far to prove the inspiration of the Bible. We are all seeking to authenticate Scripture on bald, external and physical grounds. It is significant to me, therefore, that long before men found out anything of theology, there was a faith in certain moral tendencies which has been growing ever since. The fidelity of Scripture writers, and the clarity of their vision in discerning the power of moral elements, is to me proof of the inspiration of Scripture, far above any evidence of prophecy, or miracle, or other considerations of an objective kind.

What is meekness? Are we quite right in our understanding about it? I have assumed, all through, that meekness was in your estimation a sort of still, quiet, unfighting disposition. That, certainly, is its development, frequently; but what is meekness? What is meant by the quality of meekness?—for it is a quality, and not a faculty. *Meekness* is a word representing the mode of activity of the whole mind. It is an attribute interlaced among others. The term is used to designate the spirit of the whole man, and therefore includes in it the conduct of the reason, of the moral sentiments, of the social affections, and of the passions and appetites. It takes in the entire man, and characterizes the particular mode of his carriage. It is all the faculties within, acting in a given spirit or temper. It is the holding

of the entire mind, when in great activity, and especially when under opposition and provocation—that is, under circumstances which tend to give to it the greatest amount of force—in a calm, sweet, and gentle mood, so that the action which proceeds from it shall proceed from its higher, and not from its lower, nature. It is such a holding of a man's self when he is aroused that the best and spiritual side of his nature shall lead and determine, and not the worst and human side. It is the activity and force which are developed from the divine side, and not from the human—from the moral sentiments and not from the animal passions. Therefore it has in it a certain calmness, a certain control, a certain peacefulness, a certain faith, trust, hope. It is that high and radiant state of mind in which all the faculties act as if they were held in the sweetness of the faith of God, and in the spirit of sympathy and love which is in God.

So, then, meekness is not a dawdling negative; it is not a lantern with a candle in it, cold and flickering, shining in a dark place: meekness includes energy—if you please the thunder of power—in it. It is all that is in man, thinking, willing, acting—but acting under calmness, under sweetness, under the law of benevolence. It exists where a man's nature is so under the divine impress as that the agitations which come from the passions cease, and the passions themselves become only auxiliaries, and are entirely subservient to the higher nature. It is the best side of man under provocation maintaining itself in the best mood, and controlling all men. The declaration is a general one—that this way of using a man's self is not only best for the individual, but will, in the long run, control the race. For it is not declared nor meant that each particular man who is meek shall be superior to everybody else about him. Facts contradict that. For example, if a man is very feeble—feeble in his stomach, and feeble in his lungs—then, of course, he will be feeble everywhere else. It is not meant that one man, simply because he is meek, is more victorious than another man who is strong and robust throughout, and has an endowment twenty degrees higher all around than he has. It is merely meant that if a man, with a given endowment, employs that en-

dowment according to the higher side of his nature, he will be stronger than if he employed it according to the lower side of his nature. We often see meek men go to the wall; but it is because they are weak. There is the meekness of weakness, there is the meekness of the middle nature, and there is the meekness of the strong nature; and the declaration is not that each meek man shall be victorious over everybody else, but that, in any given man, meekness is the strongest mood in which he can carry himself; and that in regard to multitudes of men, in the long run, those who carry themselves according to their highest nature in meekness shall succeed, and shall overtop, at length, those who carry themselves by their lower nature. There is an essential and predominant power of the spiritual instincts over the animal instincts in a man.

It is not meant, then, that meek men shall at once, or always, succeed in their courage or enterprise, while men that are not meek shall at once and always fail. Our observation teaches us, every day, that it is not so; but our observation also teaches us that in mixed affairs, in times of conflict, of rivalries, and of collisions, the men who are meek are, after all, the men who make headway.

Look at it. A very proud father has a son. He naturally governs him with rigor and peremptoriness. He finds out that the boy has, in his visitations, allied himself prematurely with a family with which it is very desirable there should not be a connection. On hearing of it, he rages and storms; and his wife says to him, "My dear, don't you know that if you undertake to oppose this thing in that way, you will do more harm than good? Don't you know that if you are violent with the boy, you will only ratify him in his determination?" He recognizes that fact, and calms down. He goes to the boy and says, pleasantly, "Well, my son, how is it with you? I hear that you have been visiting." "Yes," says the boy, "I have." "Well, I am very glad of it; where have you been?" "In Mr. So-and-So's family." "Ah! there are many excellent things in that family. I suppose you have become acquainted with the young people?" "Yes, sir." "And it is very natural that young people

should become attached to each other." So he goes on with the conversation in a spirit of sweetness and gentleness, till, by and by, he has brought the young man round, and drawn him away from these dangerous grounds and connections. And the effect is the same whether he puts on the meekness, or whether he feels it; whether he holds in his bad temper, and brings the sympathetic element of his nature into play, or whether he acts as he is impelled to by his better feelings. Whether he believes in meekness or not, he arrives at the desired result by the use of it. The great thing is to carry himself so as to overcome the boy's proclivities. It is not an uncommon thing to put on meekness, in order to gain a purpose.

A man owes you a large debt—larger than you ought to have allowed him to run up; and things grow squally; and you think that it is only a question of time when he will fail: but you do not go to him in anger, and say, "You owe me fifty thousand dollars, and I want you to secure it to me this very minute." What do you do? You invite him to dine with you at Delmonico's, and you laugh and talk with him; but you do not say a word to him about that debt, at first. You do say to him, "If there is anything you want, let me know it, and I will help you." Thus you get into his sympathies, working your way along gradually; and by and by you say, "I am your friend, and I will see you through this thing"; (yes, you will see him through it!) and then when you have gained his confidence completely, you say, "Could not you just arrange this thing so and so?" And before you get through with him, you worm out an arrangement with him by which you are all secure,—and you go home and laugh. But when the other creditors come to get their debts secured, they do not feel meek at all! By meekness, you have inherited that man's property, pretty much all of it!

It is so, is it not, in domestic matters, and in commercial matters? Do not men understand how unwise it is to act, in critical circumstances, from basilar motives? Do they not know how unwise it is to manifest pride and temper and greediness? Do they not know that they must throw them-

selves on the side of generosity, of benevolence, of sympathy, of honor, of all helpfulness? Do they not know that they must pat men, and come to them with the very sweetest and best things they can get out of themselves?

So men do as old housewives do who keep sage, and penny-royal, and rue, and all kinds of sweet-smelling herbs. Almost all men have sweet-smelling herbs which they keep in a cupboard to use upon occasion. They are all of them rude and selfish; but they have wrought out, not by theory, but by experience, the knowledge that the power of a man does not lie in his brute force, nor in violent temper, nor in the domination of his will. Although these sometimes succeed, it is, in the long run, the man who thinks, who plans, who adapts himself to circumstances, who holds himself under, and who seeks his rights and the ends at which he aims by using the higher side of his nature, who is, speaking in a general way, always successful.

It is not meant either, that the meek shall inherit the whole earth, as a warrior like Alexander or Cæsar or Charlemagne takes possession of an empire. It signifies the appropriation in a moral sense of the higher forces among men of every kind. The highest force, as we have termed it, is meekness. There is a direct declaration of the superiority of the human mind, working from its higher elements and temper, over the same mind, acting from the inferior or animal temperament.

"When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?"

So asks our Master. No, we reply; not in the sense of theological faith. There was enough of that in his day; but men did not believe in moral quality, except in spots and occasionally. And now, there is an unbelief among mankind as to the superiority of moral forces. Men are slow to believe that what they see to be best in certain instances is best under all circumstances. Their tendency is to believe that cunning and craft are the elements which secure success. They clothe themselves with higher qualities for a special purpose; but they do not believe that the average conduct of men founded on those elements would give better success than if they only assumed it occasionally. Meekness is

looked upon as a luxury, as an artificial thing; but the Word of God teaches that it is a primary force, that it is a dominant power. So superior is it to all other modes of carrying one's self, that when the race shall believe in it and accept it they shall inherit the earth, or that part of it which can be of any value to them. They who know how to carry all their forces in that spirit shall be the aristocrats of the race, in the highest sense of that term—that is, they shall be the best men.

Men believe now in bodily strength. They have believed in it in other ages still more than they do now. They believe in arms and armies. They believe in craft and cunning. They believe in energy, and will, and perseverance. They believe in things. They believe in matter. They believe in influencing their fellow men, working upon them by threats, by pains, by fear. There are very few men who believe that, in all directions, that man is using himself in the strongest possible manner who is using himself by his highest nature, in the sweetest and most perfect accord with the Divine nature.

But, on the other hand, the whole Bible is a protest against animalism and physicalism, and in favor of spiritual power and spiritual wisdom. The whole Bible, from the rudest ages down to our day, through blood and groans, amidst kingdoms rising and kingdoms falling, with all the powerful men in the world exercising their lower nature, has had this doctrine running straight through it—that, after all, the sweet and calm use of the superior faculties is the best wisdom, and that they miss who take any other way, while they gain who accept that way.

Men have not believed this; but there has been a witness and testimony of it all the way from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures. Faith in moral quality is the characteristic element of the Bible. Faith in integrity, faith in righteousness, faith in the power of purity, faith in that meekness which is the antipode of rude physical violence,—this abounds throughout the Word of God as one of its most prominent features. "He that has an enemy, and can crush him, is a fool if he does not strike him down," says the world. "He is a fool if he does," says the Word. "He who has a

grievous burden, and can shake it off, and does not do it, is a fool," says the world. "Come unto me, and take my yoke and my burden," saith the Lord. All the way through the early revolutionary periods, the periods when men of righteousness were driven abroad over the earth, and wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, being men of whom the world was not worthy, there never lacked this one steady testimony. What? testimony to the church? testimony to the priesthood and the temple and the altar? testimony to sacrifices and dogmatic theology? No. The one line of light that shines like a silver thread, running from Genesis to Revelation, is the declaration that the son of God is the man who is in the exercise of the highest reason and the highest moral feeling—the feeling which love inspires—the feeling of humility and meekness.

Meekness is a power, and it is the highest known power. Men have found it out, as I have said, in single spots, enough to confirm, by nascent and limited experience, the truth of it; but there has been great unbelief in the world concerning it. Men, for the most part, do not believe in the power of sweet, calm high-mindedness. Yet, in the Word of God, there has been an unbroken testimony for it. The Scriptures have, in every possible way, been continually urging it.

In a whole life-time, then, each man can do more and better work by the use of his higher than by the use of his lower nature. This is true, even if he is seeking secular success; how much more must it be true, if he is seeking success in conscious manhood! and how much more yet must it be true, if he is seeking that success which lies in the hope of immortality!

It is not by your flesh force; it is not by the force of your passions; it is not by your assurance, or pride, or hatred, or envy; it is not by craft or cunning; it is not by the combination of worldly experiences, that men are, in the best sense of the term, successful: it is by that faith of superior moral excellence which shall enable them to wait through the years; to build slowly, that they may build surely; and to build with care, that they may build wisely. It is this faith by which men grow, in the long run, and which is the secret of the

best success that is known in the world—not the success which comes from the use of the lower faculties, and which is liable to the touch of corruption, and which may in a moment be swept away by adversity, like the dust of the field; but the success which comes from the use of the higher faculties, and which is abiding. He who builds on the foundation of moral moods and moral qualities builds never to need insurance. Neither time, nor fate, nor death, can touch such a man to harm him. In the long run, the blessing of higher moral qualities in society is more than any other blessing. Even in a barbarous state he is the hero who does the things that are the least possible to the great mass of men. Self-government, and acting from a superior plane, will strike, gradually, the minds even of barbarous men. But as civilization increases—that is, as men become more *men*, as they open up more, as they have a better use of themselves, and as culture grows more—under such circumstances, in proportion as there is a development of the truth, that part of society which uses the best instruments is the part of society that prospers most.

You may divide the great cities and nations of the earth into three classes—the top, the middle, and the bottom. The middle is the great workshop. There is where the forces are in strife and struggle, and where they grind and crush. There is where the battle-shock is felt, and where the various elements are sent whirling in different directions. It is so in commerce; it is so in politics; it is so in all forms of human life. The great middle class are in perpetual antagonism, and are constantly striving against each other. But, out of this hurly-burly and conflict, there is now and then one who is lifted into a realm of peace higher than that which is attained by his fellows, and whom all men look up to. There are those who are the natural judges and counsellors of men. There is, once in a while, a man whom persons, dying, would like to have become the executor of their estates. Whom would you pick out? A man of great force, of great cunning, of great power of combination? No; you would pick out the man who, in the battle of life, has shown that he works by the principle of righteousness. Such men are the

ones who, without election, rise by spontaneity. They are God's elect. I believe in election, if you do not—only I think every man votes for himself. He who lives by the higher part of his nature is elected; and, little by little, he rises into the recognition of society around him.

Then, there is the opposite tendency. Men in the midst of these grinding forces and conflicts of life fail and go down, losing an eye, an arm, a leg, or something else, and settle gradually into the under-class of the weak, the imbecile, the unfortunate, the helpless, the useless, the mischievous, and the criminal. You shall find that these are the men who undertake to build by their basilar forces. They believe in physics; they believe in the flesh; they believe in that lower range of wisdom which they have in common with the fox and the serpent,—and these are the men in the main who are ground up here.

There are apparent exceptions to this which I have not time to argue now; but there are no real exceptions to it. There is this great under-class which comes from the under side of the human faculties, and there is this upper-class that comes from the upper side of the human faculties.

Now, I ask you, who are superior? Who are the men that have succeeded best in life? Who are the men that have held their success, and have reaped from it that for which we seek success—have attained happiness, peace with God, and peace among men? I put it to your own judgment. I put it to the observation of the youngest of you, and still more to those who are well versed in life. Are not the men who best stand the weather, the dislocations which come from commercial revulsions, and all oppositions, those who live in the exercise of their highest nature in the world? Other men have gone up, oh yes; but they have come down again. The meek were at the bottom when the race began. They had conscience, they had scruples, they had delicacy of thought and feeling; and they could not consent to be gainers at the expense of the destruction of other men. They rather pitied them, and helped them. They could not exercise hatred here and there. They must wait patiently for their success. They must live right, whether they were

successful or not. But, little by little, they grew and advanced. It is the weed that runs up quickly on the dunghill; but it seems as though corn would never get out of the ground. So men, laying the true foundations of life, seem to develop slowly; but there is steady progress in their growth, and finally their faith and patience are rewarded, and on their passage up they meet those who outstripped them at the beginning. We meet everybody twice: first, as he goes by us on his way up, laughing at us as we plod on behind him, and again, as he comes down, while we are still plodding on and up.

Men who believe in right instruments, in a right temper, in that wisdom which is in concord with God, in purity, in sympathy, in loving-kindness, and in well-wishing for every human soul, and who quadrate all their measures by these divine qualities,—such men go steadily on and up; and when you come to make up the account, and balance the books, they always come out on the credit side; they are always ahead.

Take the imperfect condition of things which exists in civilized society, and you will find that, as a general rule, men do not believe in men of meekness. But let us inquire as to who are really the men of power in the world. Ask, with me, who are the men that have lived whom time could not slay? Well, take the old Oriental monarchs. There was the Medean Empire, with its proud princes; there was the Babylonian Empire, with its proud princes; there was the Assyrian Empire, with its proud princes; and who were they? What were they? For their time, they were the richest, they were the strongest, they were the most successful men. All the world poured tribute into their luxurious self-indulgence. And what became of them? Who can tell? Time sits upon the ruins of the mighty things which they built, muttering; but we cannot hear even the name it pronounces.

"The memory of the wicked shall rot."

Who are the men that are known to-day? Who are the men that almost every child knows? They are the men who have blessed the world. They are benefactors, right-doers, good men, inspiring justice, and peacefulness, and sweetness, and harmony, and goodness, and righteousness.

Why, we hear of Alexander; yet none of his blood beats in your veins or in mine: but in your veins and in mine beats the blood of Plato, who lived by his highest nature. New England is as much Platonic as Judaic, for the Yankee is a cross between the Greek and the Hebrew.

The great thinkers and legislators of time were wise men. Their memory remains. He lives, and is immortal, who lives to do good to others besides himself. If a man is a great and pure genius he stands so high above the horizon that he never goes down below it, but will shine in the firmament forevermore.

Paul says:

"I beseech you by the gentleness of Christ."

Says Christ himself:

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

The prophet, in describing him, says:

"He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets."

He shall not be like the kingly warriors of old, who made a stand, and with crowds, with legions, and with battering-rams, dashed upon the enemy, and with yell and fury fought from house to house and from street to street.

"The bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."

This mighty Conqueror, this renowned Sovereign, this Monarch of the ages, this Lord, this Jesus, comes not with pomp and show; his kingdom comes not with observation; his advent is not with battle-cry nor with garments dyed in blood. He comes so gently that the slender reed, which, when whole, quivers in the wind, but which now, bruised, only waits for a breath to bend it to its fall—he comes so gently that this bruised reed shall not break. He comes so gently that the flickering tip of flame on the lamp, that lifts and sinks, and lifts and sinks, as if it knew not whether to go out or to abide,—so gently that the smoking flax shall not be quenched. These are the extremest figures which you can imagine by which to express the wonderful

gentleness of this Mightiest of the mighty; this Lord of lords; this King of kings; this One who is renowned of the ages past, and whose name is to be above every other name in the future: and he calls men to come to him and learn the power of meekness. When he came, it was with infinite sweetness and tenderness; and he desires his disciples to partake of those same divine qualities. Where was there ever another name of such power? and where was there ever a name that had in it so much of comforting peace and love?

The whole world to-day sit as scholars at the feet of Jesus —not necessarily as learners of theology and dogma, but as pupils seeking the illumination of human nature, faith in self-control, and aspiration, and immortality, and knowledge in the exercise of the nobler parts of man. All mankind, to-day, are Christ's scholars. Not they that are called Christians are always Christians; and not they that are called heathen are always heathen. They who have the spirit of Christ, whether they be in one or another part of the globe, are Christ's; and they who have not the spirit of Christ are none of his, no matter what official robes they may wear, or what cathedrals they may worship in. Not all who are born of Abraham are Abraham's seed, not all that are born of Christ are Christ's seed; but anybody who seeks to learn of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is in sympathy with him, and is filled with love, and with willingness to suffer—not for himself, but for others—and is giving his life for those that he loves, is a child of Christ. The tendency of the world, to-day, is in the direction of these higher qualities; and it comes from the Man of meekness. No man ever sat on the throne that had such sway as Jesus Christ has. Go with Bauer; go with Renan, who may be said, in view of his countrymen, to be one of the most eloquent eulogists of Christ, but who yet detracts from the grandeur of Christ's character; go with the most renowned authors who disparage Christ; read them all; and dispense with as much as you please of historic verity and theologic unity, and yet no man can deny that there never has lived on this globe one whose influence was so deep, so wide, so long-continued, so enduring, so

fadeless, so ever-growing, and so full of promise of growth forevermore, as the influence of the meek and lowly Jesus.

"Blessed are the meek."

You do not believe that. You will go home, to-day, from my discourse, and the servants will do wrong, or the children will do wrong, and you will get out of patience, and you will lay down the law to them, and, stamping your foot, you will say, "Now I want you to understand this matter." You will not lay down the law as Christ did when he was going up to Jerusalem, and the disciples were disputing as to who should have the precedence in his kingdom. Peter says, "I am going to be primate;" and John says, "No, not if I am alive and around, you won't." They got into a regular quarrel. It was the orders of the priesthood again, all over. But did Christ say to them, "Here, you infamous fellows! I have called you to be disciples, and are you so wanting in a sense of respectability that, the moment my back is turned, you conduct yourselves in this way?" You would think that a father might talk thus, but you would not expect the Lord to do it; and he did not. He said, with gentle tone and manner, "What were you saying?" and they, shame-faced, undertook to tell him; and he set a child in the midst of them, and said, "Whosoever shall humble himself and become as this little child shall be the chief. He that would be greatest must be least." Oh, with what sweetness, with what patience, with what love did he meet that which must have been most abhorrent to his soul! But you will return home to-day, and things will not go right, and your wife or children or servants will feel the exercise of your authority with emphasis. You do not believe in meekness.

When a thing is said that is distasteful to you, you do not believe in holding your peace. Especially if you are wronged, you believe in resenting it. But the spirit of Christ leads a man to say, "It is not for me to assert myself: it is for me to heal the wrong-doer, and help him. It is not for me to be everlastingly thinking, 'What shall be done for me?' It is for me to do what I can for everybody around me;" and in saying it, he exhibits meekness.

Now, will you do it? Will you do it among your ser-

vants? Will you do it among all the men whom you employ? Will you undertake to carry yourself so in your domestic and business relations? You will, if the sweetest and highest side of your nature is in the ascendant. In that case, you will be true disciples of Christ. Otherwise, you will not.

But you will say, "You take charge of a gang of men—a couple of hundred Irishmen—building a railroad, and try your meekness on them. It is very well for you to stand in the pulpit and preach meekness; but I should like to see you apply it to the practical affairs of life. Could you yourself exercise meekness under such circumstances?"

I know that it can be done; and I say that there never was a man of much practical experience who would not bear witness that he could get along better with men when he treated them like men, and dealt with them as if he had their welfare at heart.

You may take a couple of hundred men—I do not care how rude they are—and if you make it certain to them that you are studying their interests as well as your own, that you think of their families, that you care for them when they are sick, and that you are their defender in trouble, you will get more and better work out of them than you could in any other way.

That is a law of industry; but you do not believe it, or, you only half accept it. The best side of you, turned toward other men, makes the best side of them active. If whatever is honorable in you is brought out, it will bring out whatever is honorable in them. On the other hand, those things which are harsh and selfish and self-asserting, being brought out in you, will bring out the corresponding qualities in them. If you are bad, they will be bad.

There is what may be termed a moral echo among men. When you stand over against some cliff, and cry out, "Father," back comes "Father." Now cry out "Devil," and "Devil" comes back. What you say brings back its own response.

If you fly at your child, and say, "You imp of perdition you! What have you been doing?" the little imp of perdition may not dare to say what it has been doing, but there is

hell in it, and you have waked it up. I have seen parents go to their children thus with wrath; and I have also seen parents meet their children with patience and sweetness and love. I have seen an infuriated child rush at its mother and strike her. The mother looks down at the child kindly and gently. The child strikes her again, but not half so hard as at first. She continues to manifest sweetness toward it; and at length the child throws itself into her arms and cries. The mother has said not a word, but her meekness has subdued the passion of the child; for what one feels with power wakes up the same feeling in another.

If you bring to a man selfishness and worldliness, you wake selfishness and worldliness in him, and these qualities answer back; but if you bring to a man that royalty of true beneficence and manliness which carries in it sympathy for every human being, and treat him justly and kindly, you wake up a corresponding disposition in him. The best way to get along with men is to love them and bear with their weaknesses.

In diplomacy, it is the same thing. One of the noblest things that Count Cavour ever said was that the diplomatist who distrusted men would make more mistakes than the diplomatist who trusted men. There was the breathing of the spirit of the Gospel in that. Diplomacy has always been said to be like a lot of serpents coiled together, wily and cunning, and striving for the mastery; but Count Cavour took a higher view of it. He was a great nature. He died too soon for Italy and the world. He perceived that a diplomacy which trusted men, which had confidence in them, and which was beneficent toward them, would get a response from them, on the whole, more favorable, less fraught with evil, than a diplomacy which distrusted them, and sought to govern them by craft.

And this is just as true in regard to the whole economy of the State. We have advanced a great way beyond the modes of government which prevailed in the olden times; but we are far from being right. There are coming days in which the world will be still better governed on this principle of meekness. There is much less brute force and much more moral

sentiment employed in the intercourse of men now than there used to be; but days are coming yet when a great deal that is animal will be purged out of the world, and when a great deal that is moral and spiritual will be ushered into it.

Do you suppose you are ever going to reform sixteen hundred men in Sing Sing, when you divest them of every attribute of manhood; when you shave them like brutes; when you make them pariahs, so that they stand out distinct from their fellow-men? Do you suppose that you can treat men like animals and have them emerge like angels? Do you suppose that all the committees and praying bands that stand at the doors of Sing Sing to take the criminal when he comes out by pardon, or by the fulfillment of his sentence, can reform him after he has been for five or ten years treated as if he were a brute? You cannot reform him unless you treat him as if he were a man. You must believe in his manhood, and trust his manhood, if you would reform him. No State will reform its criminals until it knows how to treat them as Jesus Christ treated sinners. The law of mankind is, "God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it." Out of the Divine sympathy sprang salvation. This is the light that dawns upon the future; and you will never govern your family well, nor your business well, nor the State well, nor will you ever recover and reform its lapsed sons and daughters, till you know what is the power of meekness—that is, how to carry yourselves, in the administration of your laws, and in the infliction of their penalties, in accordance with the Holy Spirit of God.

Then, better days will dawn. Then, more joy will be in the household. Then, the State will need fewer constables. Then citizens will live more amicably together. Then society will strive for higher civilization. Then there will be a healing of avarice and greed. Then selfishness will decrease. Then ambition of a nobler kind, and aspiration of the higher qualities, will supersede the domination of the lower instincts. Then the animal man will grow less and less, and the spiritual man will grow more and more, till the new heaven and the new earth in which dwelleth righteousness

shall come, and Jesus, the Model, the Exemplar, the Leader, shall be the one sole King.

All hail the day! He who acts in this spirit takes one step in the march of the world toward that blessed consummation.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice, Almighty God, in thy being. We rejoice in all that we know, in all that we imagine; and we rejoice in that which lies beyond our understanding; for when by the utmost we have reached the limit of our height and depth, length and breadth, the love of Christ still passes knowledge; and we rejoice in that which is beyond. It throws light upon what is near and within our reach; and it stirs us, because it is so grand in quality that our best estate and highest nature is not able to reach unto it. So that what thou art which is known to us, fills us with gladness; and then there is the unsearchable realm of glory and of grandeur in thee which fills our souls with expectancy, and with tremulous joy and hope. Thou hast vouchsafed to us a knowledge of thyself in the outward world; and in that we rejoice. Shining on it, thou hast made it dear to us in every part. Thou hast vouchsafed a revelation to us in our own personal wants and experiences. And yet, dealing with us as with individuals in thy providence and by thy grace, thou art known to us only in part. We cannot rise to the high argument of thy dealing with the souls of men in all the variations of their continuous experience throughout the ages. We rejoice that thou hast made thyself known to us, therefore, in the life of nations, in the history of thine own church, and in the knowledge which we have of the progress of mankind through their low estate and vulgar needs up to that high estate in which they begin to represent the saints in glory. For all these various manifestations we thank thee; and though we cannot grasp them together, nor even fashion out of them, by reason of our weakness, the fullness of thy revelation of the ages, yet we do rejoice in it in parts, and in glimpses which we get of the whole that is in it.

And now, O Lord our God, to thee belongs all praise; but what is our praise to thee, we understand so little? To thee belongs the ascription of majesty and of power. Let them ascribe dominion and honor and glory who are lifted above the limitation and weakness of time, and who stand rejoicing in thy very presence. As for us, what can we bring to thee but love?

Babes can love; and little children that do not know how to interpret the household, or the reason of their parents' conduct, love them, and can strive to obey them. We bring the desire of obedience, and we bring the impulse and breathing of affection. This is all that we can do; and it is all that thou dost need. It is not the flower that lifts itself up to make the sun happy: it is the sun that pours its light and warmth into the flower, and makes it live; and we are creatures of thy thought. Thou hast poured forth thy love profusely through the universe, and therefore we exist. We are the creatures of thy thought, and love, and will, and care. Though we bring thee little, we represent to thee much; and we rejoice that there is some reason in thee why thou art glad of us. We rejoice that we are bound to thee by reasons that are in thee, and not merely by our own merit. It is this that gives us comfort and consolation. We stand, because thou dost stand. Because thou art what

thou art, we are saved. We rejoice that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

And now, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, to help us live more perfectly day by day in that liberty and that restfulness and that confidence which they have who have made God their refuge. If thou art for us, who can be against us? If thy thoughts are around about us as a sure defense, what can harm us? What can harm those all of whose ways are appointed, and those whom all things do serve? For if we love thee, all things work together for our good. And we say, in every event of life—even in the things which come and try us—We fear not the things which are hard to bear. When we have reasoned with ourselves until we understand that this is the will of God, we are able to submit and say, Thy will be done, and to find strength, and comfort, and hope, and cheerfulness in trouble, in infirmities, in temptations, in various trials.

O grant that this life may be more perfectly developed in us. Grant that we may have this higher reach of life above that which is material—above that which belongs to mankind at large. May we have the love of God. May we be among the elect—those that live by faith, by trust, by hope, by joy, and by meekness. Grant, we pray thee, that we may live in the world as above it, and that so we may control it.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon thy servants who are gathered together in thy presence. May they be able under all circumstances to represent the mind and will of Christ. May they bear their burdens cheerfully and manfully. May they carry themselves in sorrow as those who are touched of God. It is not the darkness which comes from night or terror: it is but the overshadowing of thy wings which brings the twilight. Whom thou lovest thou chastenest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest. May every one who is visited with affliction feel that God is dealing with him, not in wrath but in mercy, and that the hidden wisdom of God is doing for him that which he understands not now, but shall know hereafter. Grant that all thy servants may feel the blessedness of thine utterance: No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous; yet, afterward it worketh the peacable fruit of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby.

O how wonderful are the truths which are spoken until they have become trite to us! How ignorant are we of the fullness of their meaning till we are brought by thy providence to the need of them! How are those simple utterances that the ages have heard and neglected made to open like the very realm of heaven to us, when the soul needs them! Bless, we beseech thee, to thy servants who are in various trials and troubles, these truths that have waited so long for them. May the words of God open their arms and take into their bosom many a weary soul, many a mourner, many a disappointed one. May those who feel that the world is growing dim, rejoice that thereby the heavens may grow bright. And we pray that thou wilt remember those who believe that one and another thing is being taken away from them here. May they feel that the stakes and cords are being removed, and that their earthly tabernacle is being

taken down, preparatory to their departure for the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May we rejoice in growing age and infirmity. May we rejoice that, as one thing and another is hidden and packed out of sight, we are getting ready for the journey to the new Jerusalem. We are pilgrims, and are on our way to that glorious city, to a noble company, to a blessedness that has no representation upon earth. May we live in the full faith of that coming glory, and be content with limitation, inconvenience, annoyance, burdens, cares, whatsoever things are needful for us. Make us patient, gentle, and forbearing, seeking above all things to represent to men the sweet and blessed mildness and gentleness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered rather than to make suffering, and who died rather than to slay mankind. Grant that we may be burden-bearers for each other, and suffer for each other, and live for each other. Thus may there be a gospel which is not found among men—the new dispensation—the glory of the upper life in the soul made more powerful than the under life.

Grant, we pray thee, that this church may be blessed in all its labors—in all that it seeks to do in spreading the knowledge of Christ and the spirit of Christ. Bless its schools and missions and visitations, and all its works of charity and love. We thank thee for its unity. We thank thee that there are so many in it who breathe the very spirit of Christ. We pray that it may grow, not so much in numbers and outwardness as in the power of faith and love, and in the blessedness of an unshaken hope. May it shine out, and teach all around what is the true religion.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all churches, upon all thy servants everywhere, upon all instruments that are employed to civilize and evangelize this land.

We pray for the President of these United States, and all those that are joined with him in authority—for the Congress assembled, for all courts, for all legislatures, for all magistrates and for all citizens.

We beseech thee that thou wilt bless those who are teachers in schools and universities; the editors of papers; those who write books, and send them forth; all that are commanding the influences of civilization for the welfare of mankind. We pray that thou wilt thus sanctify the centers of influence, that civilization may not be material, but may rise to the highest spiritual forms. May nations no longer antagonize nations. Let not peace be in the intermediate sea or on the overtopping mountain, but in concord of men's hearts. May they look upon each other with love and desire for mutual prosperity and for common wealth.

So we beseech of thee that thy kingdom may come everywhere, that thy will may be done, and that the whole earth may be filled with thy glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

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